

- (a) Developing secondary and tertiary services, which incorporates the modernization of health infrastructures;
- (b) Strengthening primary healthcare services which include the extension and upgrading of primary healthcare infrastructures and strengthening of “home care” services;
- (c) Re-engineering NCD services and health promotion process, by strengthening the National NCD programme; and
- (d) Enhancing education and training by setting-up of teaching departments in clinical service and other disciplines, and the design of a human resource planning system.

Furthermore, the other health orientations will focus on:

- Setting up of a full-fledged Directorate of Medical Services and implementing a Patient’s Charter;
- Restructuring the casualty units with adequately trained personnel so as to remove bottlenecks at such points. Efforts will be made to ensure patient-friendliness and professionalized service. Services in healthcare centres will be computerized with the aim of providing patient and management information as well as promoting the elimination of resource wastage;
- Reforming the ‘AIDS /STIs Unit, and setting up of a detoxification unit;
- Setting-up of a National Service Framework for Diabetes with achievable objectives and targets;
- Setting-up of a specialized Children’s Hospital and intensive neo-natal services in two major regional public hospitals;
- Implementing innovative measures to address the problem of brain drain of healthcare professionals; and
- Reviewing and upgrading health services.

2.8 HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

The national health system, per se, is facing emerging challenges in the wake of changing lifestyles accompanied by new dietary patterns and globalization, which, on the one hand, increase the burden of chronic diseases and, on the other hand, constitute a risk of acceleration of global transmission of communicable diseases. Furthermore, as a small developing island State, the health system in Mauritius is not immune to the backdrop of climate change and recent food insecurity crisis. All these factors pose daunting challenges for the (public) health systems in terms of providing effective and equitable response. A holistic reform of Primary Health Care as an integral component of health systems needs to be undertaken, focusing, among others, on re-organizing the service delivery model to address rising patients’ expectations and social determinants of health responsible for health inequalities.

NCDs in Mauritius represent 74% of the total burden of disease in men and 76% in women and include diabetes, hypertension, cerebrovascular diseases, cancer, mental illness and substance-related diseases linked to tobacco use and alcohol abuse. Successive surveys have shown that NCDs and their risk factors represent a major threat to public health development in Mauritius. In spite of the considerable volume of work done by various ministries with regard to alcohol consumption and tobacco use, coordinated efforts by these ministries should be requested to address them more effectively as risk factors for NCDs. Projections indicate that the burden of disease for the single component of alcohol